



**CITY OF SALINAS
COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**

DATE: JUNE 30, 2026

DEPARTMENT: ADMINISTRATION

BY: RENE MENDEZ, CITY MANAGER

FROM: PATRICIA M. SORATOS, CITY CLERK

TITLE: APPOINTMENTS TO THE SALINAS VALLEY GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a Resolution appointing Mayor Dennis Donohue to serve as the City’s primary representative, and Councilmember Jose Luis Barajas as alternate, on the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SVBGSA) JPA Board of Directors.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City of Salinas is a member entity of the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency JPA Agreement. The governance model was approved by the City Council on December 13, 2016, and the City of Salinas has the responsibility for appointing a representative seat and an alternate to represent the City on the JPA Board. Mayor Dennis Donohue has expressed interest in serving as the primary representative and Councilmember Barajas as the alternate representative. The appointment term runs from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2029.

BACKGROUND:

In 2014, the California legislature adopted, and then-Governor Brown signed into law, three bills (SB 1168, AB 1739, and SB 1319) collectively referred to as the “Sustainable Groundwater Management Act” (SGMA). The stated purpose of SGMA is to provide for the sustainable management of groundwater basins at a local level by providing local groundwater agencies with the authority, and technical and financial assistance, necessary to sustainably manage groundwater. SGMA also required the designation of a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the purpose of achieving groundwater sustainability through the adoption and the implementation of Groundwater Sustainability Plans for all medium and high priority basins as designated by the California Department of Water Resources.

In accordance with the JPA Agreement and the governance model that was approved by the City Council on December 13, 2016, the City of Salinas has the responsibility for appointing a

representative seat and an alternate to represent the City on the JPA Board. Councilmember Barajas was appointed to this seat with Mayor Donohue as an alternate to complete the three-year term set to expire June 30, 2026. The new term commences on July 1, 2026 and expires on June 30, 2029. Mayor Dennis Donohue has expressed interest in serving as the primary representative and Councilmember Barajas as the alternate representative.

This action requires City Council approval through formal appointment of the primary representative and the alternate representative in accordance with the JPA’s Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

Not a Project. The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378).

CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE §84308 APPLIES:

No.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

This action aligns with the City Council’s goal of Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resiliency (City of Salinas Strategic Plan 2025-2028).

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

The activities of the GSA generally do not involve other City departments; however, from time-to-time issues come up which require the attention and the coordination of the Administration Department, City Attorney’s Office, and Public Works Department.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

Fund	General Ledger Number (Operating/CIP)	General Ledger Account Name	Remaining Budget Appropriation	Amount Requested
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution